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V.—A CAMPAIGN OF EPIGRAM AGAINST MARCUS ANTONIUS IN THE CATALEPTON.

The arrangement of poems in the *Catalepton* disguises the existence of two distinct groups, the one friendly and the other polemical. The former group throws light upon the membership of the Augustan Circle revealing the intimacy of Vergil and *Tucca* (i), the preceptual leadership of *Varius* (vii), and the affectionate character of *Octavius Musa* (iv and xi); the more distant connection of *Messalla* may be inferred from the ninth, while the last (xiv) shows due regard for *Augustus*; Vergil's eager anticipations of pleasure from the instruction of *Siro* the Epicurean, and perhaps his grief at his death, may be seen in the fifth and the eighth.

Touching the remaining poems, which are sharply satirical in the rougher manner of *Catullus* and rendered enigmatic by the use of pseudonyms, it is not self-evident that they constitute a group nor that *Marcus Antonius* and men of his set are the targets of the poet's shafts. Yet the undoubted recognition in Nos. ii and x of attacks upon *T. Annius Cimber* and *P. Ventidius Bassus*, notorious henchmen of *Antony*, and that too in the year 43 when animosity was at its height and *Cicero* was delivering the *Philippics*, suggests the interpretation of other poems as a part of the campaign against *Antony*, an assumption that is strengthened by a number of known facts and is not contradicted by a demonstrable inconsistency or rival hypothesis. Besides this, we might well expect the ambitious son of a thrifty landed citizen to join in the outcry against the anarchistic conduct of *Caesar's* lieutenant.

Firm ground for a beginning is afforded by the second epigram, which, although nameless itself, is positively stated by *Quintilian* (8, 3, 28) to refer to a certain *Cimber* who is well known for the grilling he receives in the *Philippic* xi 14. Since both epigram and oration make capital of *Cimber's* murder of his own brother, the two must belong to the same campaign of vituperation and may be placed in the early part of 43 B. C. I offer a text, translation, and brief explanation of the epigram because

it is elliptical in style and commonly regarded as corrupt and almost uninterpretable.

Corinthiorum amator iste verborum,
iste iste rhetor! namque quatenus totus
Thucydides, Brittannus! Attice febris!
Tau Gallicum, min et spin, ut male illisit,
ita omnia ista verba miscuit fratri.

'It's Corinthian words he's enamoured of, yon ass of a rhetorician! For he's no more a sheer Thucydides than he is a Briton! Attic delusion! As he jumbled his stupid *tau Gallicum*, his *min* and his *spin*, so he compounded a dose of all that kind of words for his brother'.

He probably poisoned his brother. Cicero makes two puns on the man's name and his crime in Phil. xi 14. *Corinthian* means archaic, transferred from bronzes; *Brittannus*: type of the outlandish; *tau Gallicum*: explained by Kaibel (Rhein. Mus. 44 p. 316) as a cross for crucifixions, but I cannot connect this with the poem; I suggest that the question is one of aspiration as in Catullus lxxxiv, and that the Gallic pronunciation of *th* may have something to do with it. The Gallic *θ* occurs in inscriptions (C. I. L. xii index under *Litterarum formae*). Cimber, whose father had a Greek servile name (Phil. xi 14), was probably a Graecized Gaul and may have spoken with a Gallic accent. The absurdity of his style is suggested by a letter of Augustus quoted by Suetonius (86).

Hardly less certain is the identification of Sabinus in No. x with P. Ventidius Bassus who, as praetor in 43, was declared a public enemy along with Antony, but afterwards had brilliant success as his lieutenant in the East and triumphed over the Parthians. Unless this Ventidius be the same as Vergil's Sabinus, we are confronted, not with two portents alone, as Buecheler has it (Rhein. Mus. 38 p. 519), but with three: first and second, that two muleteers should have reached a curule chair, and third, that they should have done so simultaneously. Had such an unnatural event transpired, surely the elder Pliny would have noted it in his Natural History when he told the story of Ventidius (vii 43 135). It is a slight objection that Ventidius was originally from Picenum while our satire says, speaking of Gaul,

tua stetisse ultima ex origine dicit in voragine.

He was carried as an infant, Aulus Gellius tells us (xv 4), in the

triumphal procession of Pompeius Strabo after the subjugation of his native land and there is nothing to show that the rest of his childhood and youth were not spent in muddy Gaul. One must remember the straits of the parody and refrain from pressing the *ultima ex origine* of Catullus to mean that Ventidius was born in Gaul instead of being carried there as an infant. The other difficulty, arising from the three cognomina, may be diminished to a minimum: if Ventidius chose to call himself Sabinus *licentia candidatorum*, he may have had some right to do so since the Sabines had occupied Picenum before the Romans, and if he be the Sabinus of Cicero's *ad fam.* xv 20 1, we have evidence there that he possessed the features of the race he claimed. The earlier cognomen, *Quintio*, a servile name (C. I. L. x 6269, and index), may well have been hurled at any muleteer by passengers or humorous neighbors; names, like vessels, are made for honor and for dishonor, and many fail to get recorded in the census. These explanations may fall short of certainty but we prefer them to the three portents mentioned above.

Nos. vi, xii, and xiii we believe to be aimed at Antony himself. It is possible that xii and xiii are placed in juxtaposition because they explain each other. The former is a kind of charivari on the occasion of Antony's marriage to his cousin Antonia, whose only sister, it is here insinuated, is not herself averse to receiving Antony's attentions; in consequence, this sister may well be the *prostituta soror* of xiii 7-9, whose intimacy is there cast up to whoever is the subject of the satire. Antony is called *Noctuinus*, a fictitious cognomen from *noctua* like *Corvinus* from *corvus*, because of his orgies by night and lethargy by day, to which Plutarch gives express testimony (*Vita ix*). *Atilius*, which must be a pseudonym since *Noctuinus* is coined for the occasion, is a scornful way of denoting the exiled and reprobate uncle, C. Antonius, by enigmatic reference to the famous patriot, M. Atilius Regulus. This uncle and father-in-law of Antony, if he be Atilius, seems to have preferred the vulgar *hirnea* as a drinking vessel: hence the explanation of

Adeste nunc, adeste: ducit ut decet
Superbus ecce Noctuinus *hirneam*,

in xii, and also the *hirneosus patruus* in xiii 39, both of which Scaliger had spoiled by reading *herniam* and *herniosi* against the best MS. Nos. xii and xiii are also linked together by the use of

thalassio, which in the former is a mocking echo of Antony's shameless use of this exclamation as witnessed in xiii 16.

No. xiii expresses the jubilation of Vergil at the imminent downfall of some notorious person, which is instantly anticipated because of his crimes, debauchery, and bankruptcy, a combination that, in this period especially, points strongly to Antony. The threatened rebuke of Caesar, suggested in the *improbande Caesari*, l. 7, points in the same direction and reminds us of the indignation caused among the citizens by Antony's conduct during Caesar's absences (Plutarch, ix). The date of the poem can be readily fixed in 45 B. C. before the reconciliation with Caesar on his return from Munda and while yet the Romans were rejoicing at Antony's embarrassment over the demand of payment for Pompey's house and the threat of distraint. The occasion is aptly described in the following words of the Second Philippic, 74: *Haerebat nebulo: quo se verteret non habebat*. The reconciliation that disappointed Rome is mentioned *ibid.* 78.

The first six lines of xiii are autobiographical, seeming to describe the winter campaign of Dyrrachium and the midsummer conflict of Pharsalus, to which the poet may have owed his loss of health. We read next of *furta* and *stupra*, about which we have more particular information from Cicero: Phil. ii 41 and 62; 44 and 45 entire. Next comes an illustration of his enjoyment of vulgar feasts and amusements; Antony was a capital "mixer" (Plut. Vita iv, ix, and xliii). The last eight lines speak of imminent bankruptcy and worthless brothers, of whom we know enough from the Philippics. The text of the poem is still in need of careful editing, but the parallelism of the whole work with the Second Philippic is as manifest as it ever will be. To deny the connection is to lead us nowhere.

Four poems of the group remain. No. vi I have discussed already (A. J. P. XXXII, p. 451) but it may be added that the *stupor* of Noctuinus, here ridiculed, reminds us of many passages in the Second Philippic such as: *Sed stuporem hominis vel dicam pecudis attendite* (Phil. ii 30); recall also the βραδεία αἰσθησις ascribed to Antony in Plutarch (xxiv). It might also be suggested that the girl whose character is so neatly slurred in this epigram may be Cytheris, the *mima* of the Philippic, whose wit is contrasted to Antony's stupidity, Phil. ii 20: *Aliquid enim salis a mima uxore trahere potuisti*. Moreover the refusal of the lady to go to the country, mentioned in the epigram, may have been

the occasion of the separation which Cicero scornfully calls a divorce (Phil. ii 69). It is regrettable that we know so little of the uncle C. Antonius, but Cicero was true to his worthless colleague all his life long and for this reason much of the truth is concealed. However, what we do know gives us no justification for not believing worse.

In No. v the poet bids farewell to the rhetoricians and the unchaste muse, but he must take a final fling at one Sextus Sabinus, who may well be Sextus Clodius, the rhetorician who received 2000 jugera of Leontine land for teaching Antony how to make an ass of himself (Phil. ii 63). The *Sabinus* will be but mockery of his Sicilian origin (Suetonius, De Rhet. 5).

After an interval of a couple of years we find the Vergil family anticipating with resignation the loss of their lands in Transpadane Gaul. The reference occurs in the address to the Villa of Siro, No. viii: *si quid de patria tristius audiero*. Its interest in this connection is the key it affords to the poet's hatred of Antony. The Vergil family were typical of that thrifty, moral, landed class which cared more for peace and prosperity than for political ideals. They loved the name of Caesar who had bestowed upon Gaul the liberty the Republic had denied, but when the preservation of their acres depended upon the success of Decimus Brutus, one of the assassins, they forgot their grief in detestation of that *bête noire* of people with property, Marcus Antonius.

Our group of invectives, after an interval of more than a decade, is followed by an epigram upon the death of Antony (No. iii), which, exhibiting as it does the sad reflectiveness common to the Greek Anthology with the Aeneid, possesses a unique significance for our knowledge of Vergil's reading and the affinities of his thought and feeling. The confident statement of Buecheler (Rhein. Mus. 38 p. 511), which has not met with marked dissent, that no Roman whatever can be thought of as the subject of this poem, serves to remind us forcibly how extremely difficult it is to realize the high preëminence of Antony's name in the whole Roman world from the time of Caesar's assassination until the flight from Actium, and the fearful anxiety of Italy until the future of the government was finally decided. Nettleship was a victim of the same prepossession, or rather forgetfulness, in referring the poem to Phraates IV, king of Parthia, a theory we admit having entertained for a time (A. J. P. XXXII, p. 451). Buecheler's view, that Alexander is the subject, not only reduces

the poem to a cold, scholastic or juvenile exercise and renders it a strange exception among intimate, autobiographical pieces, but meets an obstinate block of stumbling in the mention of 'exile' (line 8). Those who stand for Alexander interpret this as a euphemism for Orcus (Christensen), or as the deprivation of burial in his native land (Buecheler), or refer it to the wanderings of his corpse (Birt). I leave men to judge for themselves whether any of these is convincing, but the puzzlement of the doctors, it must be observed, tells strongly against the Alexander hypothesis. Neither are we prepared to believe that the invasion of Italy by Alexander was ever so much feared as to justify the trepidation of line 5, while no one is ignorant of the terror inspired at Rome by the approach of Cleopatra's paramour. On the other hand, if we assume that Antony is meant, there is nothing that will not fit when once we reconceive the nature of Rome's outlook while yet Octavianus was distrusted and almost despised, and his rival was the master of the East and the darling of the legions. We add a translation and some references to support our view.

'Behold a man, whom, by a powerful kingdom's strength supported, Glory had raised on high, to heaven's very thrones. This man the whole wide world with war had shaken, the might of Asia's princes and her peoples he had shattered. Yet but a little while and he had brought to thee, O Rome, the bitterness of slavery, for by the prowess of his spear all else had fallen, when on a sudden, the issue of decisive struggle pending, downward headlong he fell from fatherland to exile driven. Thus does the goddess will; at such behest without a moment's warning the faithless hour deals the mortal's doom'.

First couplet: *regno*: Egypt; the man is not called a king yet he has a kingdom at his back. *Subnixum*: a prose word affected by Vergil; cf. Aen. i 462 *solioque alte subnixa resedit* (*Dido*). Personification of Gloria: Aen. x 144 *sublimen Gloria tollit*. *Sedibus*: Aen. vi 152 *sedibus hunc ante refer suis*. Antony paraded as Hercules (Plutarch, Vita iv); he was called the new Dionysus (*ibid.* lx); in Cilicia the people referred to Cleopatra as Aphrodite and to Antony as Dionysus (*ibid.* xxxvi); and at a later time he and the queen were represented together in painting and sculpture as Osiris and Isis (Dio Cass. L 5). Apart from this Oriental nonsense, which was nevertheless offensive enough at Rome, his actual fame was second only to Caesar's from the

time of the battle of Pharsalus to the Ides of March and, from that time until Actium, unrivalled. See Plutarch's tributes, Vita viii and xliii.

Second couplet: cf. Aen. viii 685-688:

hinc ope barbarica variisque Antonius armis,
victor ab Aurorae populis et litore rubro,
Aegyptum viresque Orientis et ultima secum
Bactra vehit, sequiturque (nefas) Aegyptia conjunx.

To this may be added the muster of kings in Plutarch, Vita lxi.

Third couplet: Rome feared Antony at Actium more than she had feared Hannibal at her gates. The report was current that Alexandria would be the capital and Italy be made a present to Cleopatra (Dio Cass. I 4). It was Cleopatra's dearest wish to sit in judgment on the Capitol (ibid. L 5).

Fourth couplet: This describes the sudden collapse of Antony's campaign and the flight from Actium. Antony thereafter considered himself an exile and pleaded for permission to spend the balance of his life as a private citizen at Athens (Plutarch, Vita lxxii).

Last couplet: Most difficult of interpretation but, once the sense is perceived, truly Vergilian. *mortalia* = *ea quae mortalibus fato debentur*; cf. Aen. i 462 *mentem mortalia tangunt*. *Fallax hora*: Georg. i 426 *numquam te crastina fallit / hora*. *Dedit*, which the editors emend to *adedit*, *premit*, *ferit*, and *terit*, is "customary" perfect and nothing but 'dare' in its commonest sense. Cf. Horace, Odes iii 8 28 *Dona praesentis cape laetus horae*; also ibid. ii 16 31-32 *Et mihi forsán quod negarit / porriget hora*. The hour is more often the bringer of good gifts, which adds a grimness to the Vergilian passage.

NORMAN W. DE WITT.